1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

773 number." The gods are believed to have held their councils,
776 meeting on some special hill, to which each god came from
his own hill-top. The hill of Pòlkab, near Kanòdrs, and the
823 village of Miuni are both renowned as meeting places of the gods.

There is a very definite association between the Toda gods and the hills of the Nilgiri plateau. Nearly every one of the gods has his hill where he dwells, and often when speaking of the gods the Todas seem to identify the god with the hill. There are two river gods, Teipakh and Pakhwar, associated with the two chief streams of the district, but there is some reason to believe that even these gods have their hills where they sometimes live, while at other times they inhabit or are identified with their streams. In the case of Teipakh, the god and the natural object seem to be very closely identified, and Kuzkarv, growing up in the river Teipakh, is said to be sitting in the lap of his maternal uncle. Again, one god is associated with a bubbling pool, but he also has his hill-top and is believed only to visit the pool on certain occasions. There can be little doubt that most of the Toda gods are hill-deities and that the association of the gods with hills is so strong that even the gods of streams and pools may be assigned their hills in general belief.

●172 There is one important feature which is said to be common to all the hills inhabited by deities. They all have on their summits the stone circles which the Todas call *pun*. My informants were very definite about this and fully understood that these stone circles corresponded to the cairns and barrows opened by Breeks and others.

I was not able to examine into the question for myself and ascertain whether the circles called *pun* were actually present on the god-inhabited hills, but I have no reason to doubt that this was usually the case. Most writers on the Todas have been inclined to suppose that the cairns and barrows, with their contents, were in no way connected with the Todas, and they have based this opinion largely on the indifference of the Todas to these monuments. The people who are so jealous of their dairies that they will not allow anyone to enter or even view their contents, will allow any stranger to open the

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

cairns and take their contents, and will even assist in the demolition. When I asked the Todas what they thought of the rifling of the *pun* they showed just the same indifference. They did not seem to think the matter any concern of theirs, and yet they believe in a definite association between the presence of a *pun* and the abode of a deity. 172

There seem to be three chief possibilities. One, that the cairns are Toda remains and that the association of the stone circles above them with the presence of a god is the last surviving relic of the fact. The second is that when the Todas came to the Nilgiri hills they found mysterious stone circles on certain hills, which marked out these hills as possessing features out of the common, and that this gave them a sanctity which led to the idea that they were inhabited by gods. A third possibility is that the same peculiarities which led the original builders of the circles to choose certain hills also led the Todas to choose them as the abodes of their deities, and that it was only later that they came to recognise the association between the circle and the presence of a god.

Whichever possibility may give the true explanation, one would have thought that the Todas would have objected to the disturbance and excavation of the cairns. There is little doubt that they were ignorant of the fact that objects were buried beneath the stone circles, but they are quite intelligent enough to know that there is a connexion between the stones and the objects beneath them when once these have been found.

I have very little doubt that the true explanation of the indifference of the Todas towards these monuments is that they have no definite traditional injunction against interfering with the circles. The Todas are the slaves of their traditions and of the laws and regulations which have been handed down to them by their ancestors. Till the Europeans came to the hills, it had never occurred to anyone to meddle with these stones or explore the soil beneath and around them. In consequence there was no reason why injunctions against interference should be handed down, and when the European arrived with his spade and pickaxe the Todas found nothing in their traditional laws telling them that it was wrong to 172 183

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

172 interfere with these places, and they exhibited the indifference
183 which led the explorers to suppose that there was no connexion of any kind between the Todas and the monuments.[1]

776 Although the Toda deities seem to be in general a development of hill-spirits, there can be little doubt that some of the gods are deified men. In the case of Kwoten, the account of his life is so circumstantial as to leave little doubt that he was a real man who was deified after a mysterious disappearance, believed to have been due to intercourse with a female deity, and around whose life there have clustered certain miraculous incidents. Similarly, his servant Erten, and his relatives Teikuteidi and Elnakhum are probably deified men.

Another possible instance of a deified man is Kwoto or Meilitars. The account of his life is again so circumstantial that it seems most likely that he was an exceptional man who was deified while various incidents in his life acquired a miraculous setting. It is perhaps in favour of the comparatively recent origin of these gods that objects belonging to them, or which come into their lives in some way, are still preserved, and perhaps a still more cogent argument in favour of the recent deification of Kwoten is the fact that the prohibition against marriage between the clans of Pan and Kanòdrs, believed to be due to the murder of Parden by Kwoten, still persists.

Of these deified mortals one became associated with a definite hill while the other was not assigned any special hill, but it was believed that all places should form his province.

769 There is little doubt that these mortals were deified as
771 heroes and not as ancestors, and there is little to indicate that
776 ancestor-worship has played any part in the evolution of the Toda religion. When a person dedicated a buffalo on account of some fault committed, it seemed that the action might be spoken of indifferently as dedication to the gods or to the ancestors of the dedicator. Thus, when Teitnir gave a

[1] I do not intend by this to indicate my belief that these cairns are ancient Toda monuments. I only wish to point out that one of the arguments which has been directed against this view is probably not valid. I shall return to this point in a future chapter.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

but, leaving this on one side, there seems to be no doubt that both Christians and Jews were well established in Malabar more than a thousand years ago. An ancient document is still preserved by the Jews of Cochin, which was given to their leader by the Perumal of the day, and this document can be dated about 750 A.D. A similar document preserved by the Nestorian Christians can be dated 774 A.D.

If the Todas left Malabar at the beginning of the Perumal rule, Jewish or Christian influences can be excluded, but if at a

FIG. 75 (from Breeks).—A CAIRN ON THE NILGIRI HILLS.

later period such influences may have been present, though it is very improbable that they were important; for, unless the Todas have changed very much, they would have been very unlikely to have borrowed from religious settlers of an alien race. Still, in considering the strange resemblance between the Hebrew and Toda versions of the Creation, this possible influence should be borne in mind.

I have so far said nothing of the archæological evidence which may possibly help in the settlement of the vexed

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

●172 questions which I have raised in the preceding pages. Our knowledge of the history of the Todas would be very materially advanced if we knew whether the cairns, barrows and other ancient remains which are found on the Nilgiri Hills are Toda monuments. In the cairns and barrows there are found objects which suggest a Toda origin, such as figures of buffaloes with bells round their necks (see Fig. 76, 9), but the vast majority of the finds are utterly unlike anything now possessed by the Todas. They include pottery of many designs, the lids of the vessels being often adorned with the figures of animals. Many other animal figures have also been found, and though that of the buffalo often occurs, figures of the horse (see Fig. 76, 10), sheep, camel, elephant, leopard (?), pig (?), and low-country bullock with hump are all found. Such figures can only have been made by those well acquainted with the low country, and none of these animals are ever mentioned in Toda legends.

Metal work is also found in the cairns and barrows; bronze vases, basins and saucers (Fig. 76, 1, 2, 3), iron razors, styles or pins (?), and daggers (Fig. 76, 8), while iron spear-heads (Fig. 76, 4, 7, 13) are frequently met with.

In addition to the more elaborate cairns, cromlechs and barrows found on the Nilgiri Hills, Breeks, to whom we owe most of our knowledge on this subject, found what he took to be ancient examples of the *azaram* or circle of stones within which the Toda buries the ashes of his dead at the end of the second funeral. In such *azaram* in the district between Kotagiri and Kwòdrdoni, Breeks found bronze bracelets and rings, iron spear-heads, a chisel, a knife and an iron implement in something of the style found in Malabar and differing from those usually found in the cairns.

Breeks points out that the characteristic feature of the cairns and barrows of the Nilgiris is the circle of stones, and that some consist of an insignificant circle hardly to be distinguished from the Toda *azaram*. He often found it difficult to say whether a given monument was a cairn or an *azaram*, so that it would appear that there are intermediate gradations between the more elaborate cairns or barrows containing the pottery and metal work and the simple Toda *azaram*

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

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FIG. 76.—VARIOUS OBJECTS FOUND IN THE NILGIRI CAIRNS, TAKEN FROM BREEKS.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

172 From the amount of rust on the iron implements, however, Breeks concluded that there was a long interval of time between the most recent of the cairns and the oldest *azaram*, but he points out that if the latter are really *azaram*, they show that the Todas used at one time to bury such objects as iron spears.[1]

As regards the cairns, Breeks points out that though the figures of many animals occur in addition to that of the buffalo, most of the animals are so badly imitated that it is difficult to identify them, while the figures of the buffaloes are singularly characteristic and often very spirited.

The only implements found by Breeks which might be agricultural were shears and sickles (Fig. 76, 12, 5), and he recalls the *kafkati* burnt by the Todas with their dead, which is a curved knife, different, however, in shape from the sickles often found in the cairns.

On the other hand, very few of the human figures found in the cairns resemble the Todas in any way; the women have the low-country top-knot instead of the Toda curls, and they carry chatties on their heads, which would never be done by a Toda woman at the present time, whatever she may have done in the past.

Breeks himself inclined to the view that the cairns are Toda monuments. One objection which has been made to this view is that the Todas exhibit little or no interest in the cairns, and offer no objection to their excavation. I have already given reasons[2] why this cannot be regarded as a conclusive argument against the Toda origin of the monuments. The Todas certainly identify the hills which possess stone circles with the abodes of their gods, and the absence of objections to the excavation may merely be due to the fact that they have no traditional injunctions against interference with these circles.

174 771 In dealing with the religion of the Todas, I have advanced the view that the ritual and beliefs of the people furnish us with an example of a religion in a state of decadence. It seems probable that the Todas once had a religious cult of a

[1] It will be remembered that the Todas claim to have once possessed a spear which had belonged to their god, Kwoten.

[2] See p. 445.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

distinctly higher order than that they now possess, and if I am right in supposing that the Todas came from Malabar, it might follow that they brought their highly developed religion with them, and that although certain features of the religion may have undergone great development, the general result of the long isolation has been to produce degeneration. The study of the religion suggests that we have in the Todas an example of a people who show us the remnants of a higher culture.

If we could accept the view that the cairns, barrows, and cromlechs of the Nilgiri Hills were the work of the ancestors of the Todas, we should have at once abundant further evidence that the Todas have degenerated from a higher culture. We should have an example of a people who once used, even if they did not make, pottery, showing artistic aptitudes of a fairly high order which they have now entirely lost. The Toda now procures his pottery from another race, and, so long as this is of the kind prescribed by custom, he is wholly indifferent to its æsthetic aspect. I doubt if there exists anywhere in the world a people so devoid of æsthetic arts, and if the Nilgiri monuments are the work of their ancestors, the movement backwards in this department of life must have been very great.

It is easy to see how the Todas may have lost such arts, supposing that they once possessed them. The Toda now regards nearly every kind of manual labour as beneath his dignity, and if a people showing artistic skill in the adornment of the articles they use in everyday life should hand over the making of these articles to another race, it is fairly certain that the artistic side would suffer, and this is especially likely to happen when the artisans whose services are employed are such people as the Kotas.[1] Assuming that such a transference took place, it is easy to understand the complete disappearance of art even higher than that which the contents of the monuments show.

The use of the bow and arrow and the club in ceremonial

[1] The argument will hold equally well if the Todas in their previous home had been accustomed to procure their pottery from others, but had when they reached the Nilgiris to rely solely on the Kotas for help in this direction.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

172 furnishes us with another example of material objects which
174 have wholly disappeared from the active life of the Todas, and
182 here again it is easy to see why the disappearance has taken place, for on the Nilgiris the Todas have had no enemies, either human or feral. This disuse of weapons has indeed so obvious an explanation that it cannot be treated as an instance of degeneration; and while the origin of the cairns remains doubtful, the only evidence of degeneration of culture is shown by the religion; and though it seems to me that the evidence here, especially that derived from the nature of the prayers, is conclusive, it may not be so regarded by all.

174 In the preceding lines I have put forward for consideration
182 the tentative hypothesis that the Todas may furnish us with
771 an example of a people who once have possessed a higher
788 culture of which some features have undergone degeneration. If we combine this hypothesis with that advanced earlier, that the Todas came from Malabar, we may suppose that the Todas brought the higher culture with them from this district, and if this were so, the original culture of the Todas may have been on much the same general level as that of the dominant castes of Malabar at the present day. On this hypothesis, it seems to me most likely that in their new home the religion of the Todas underwent a very special development, its ritual coming to centre more and more round the buffalo, because in their very simple environment this was the most accessible object of veneration. I think there is little doubt that the extraordinary development of the ritual of the dairy must have taken place since the Todas have been on the Nilgiris; and, as I have already pointed out, it seems to me most probable that the degeneration of the religion has been largely a consequence of the extreme development of this ritual aspect of their religion.

771 If we reject the view that the Todas are representatives of
794 one or more of the castes of Malabar whose institutions have in some ways degenerated during a long period of isolation, the most likely alternative view is that the Todas are one of the hill tribes of the Western Ghats who have developed a higher culture than the rest in the very favourable environ-

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. I.

settling on its very topmost plateau, where we now find them, whilst a small remnant, winding behind its north-western slopes, remained on one of the lower plateaus, called the Wynâd.

This modern place of Toda residence is an isolated mountain, upwards of seven thousand feet above sea level, upreared on E. longitude 76° 45′ and N. latitude 11° 20′, amidst the plains of South India—the gigantic and sudden culmination of the minor mountain-chain system, called the Eastern and Western Ghats, which there meet.

These, their last movements, having been very small and of minor importance, I have included their past and their present places of residence in one area, marked VI. on the map.

Not only the summit of the Nilagiris, but the tops of the minor rounded eminences thereon, are studded with kairns, raised for the reception of ashes of the dead, by a race whose history has been so completely lost that not a tradition even of it remains. On the same plateau are also a few kromlechs, also many deserted circles of stones, situated near streams of running water; some manifestly constructed for pounding cattle, others, with equal certainty, not made for that purpose —being in exposed situations and having rocky beds.

These erections undoubtedly do not belong to the Todas, who not only do not regard them with reverence, but assert that they were of a people antecedent to themselves on the mountain. Moreover they are found in many parts of the Indian peninsula and of Western India. But I may do service in drawing attention to points in which the cremation customs of this unknown race are those of the Todas, and to those in which they differ from them.

In brief, we find, from relics exhumed from kairns, that their owners made use of the horse: that they practised agriculture, holding the buffalo in high esteem, and burying its bell with the manes of the deceased. We learn that they were acquainted with the use of the spear, bow and arrow:

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

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that their women wore simple jewelry, and that all their implements, weapons and ornaments, whilst of a very primitive nature, were of designs extant, not only in India, but in this part of the country.

We may safely deduce from the evidences of care manifest in the solidity of these stone receptacles, as well as from the positions in which we find them, both that these people held the memory of the dead in great respect, and their property alive to be their property when dead, and that their religious belief, as regards the future state, was connected by some line of thought with prominent natural features of the country.

In many respects, viz. in the custom of cremation, the regard shown to buffaloes, the especial notice of its bell, the practice of burying weapons and personal ornaments, we shall find in due course, almost an identity with the obsequies and modes of thought now displayed by the Todas; and Mr. Metz writes, concerning the Toda faith: 'Their idea is that the spirits of deceased Todas, together with the souls of the buffaloes killed by their friends to accompany them to heaven and supply them with milk there, *take a leap from Makurti Peak*, as the nearest way to the celestial regions.'[1]

The chief points of variance between the two peoples, consist in the evidences in the Kairn-builders, of a civilisation —implied in the practice of agriculture, and in raising stone constructions to contain their dead—somewhat superior to that of the Todas. Regarding the matter of husbandry, the Todas could not be more backward in respect to these unknown Kairn-builders than they are behind all the tribes of Dravidians which at this very day surround and isolate them. A certain small degree only of civilisation is of necessity implied in the presence of simple implements of cultivation.

The evidence of stone cemeteries, probably does not imply

[1] Metz, 'The Tribes of the Nilgherry Hills.'

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

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the exercise of so much labour as would at first appear; for what more likely—indeed, almost certain—than that each village or family erected one once for all for itself, and that it was filled in by degrees? But it would express a method of disposing of the ashes, somewhat superior in completeness, refinement, and perhaps in depth of religious feeling, to that practised by the Todas, nothing more. No essential difference in race, but merely a tribal custom.

I would advance, therefore, the great likelihood of these Kairn-builders having been members of certain Turanian tribes of a similar stage of culture to our early Drâvidians; each of which would have brought with it the custom of the particular portion of Western Asia from which it migrated—this tribe, apparently, from a rocky and hilly region.

It does not seem too much to insist that, in grand migrations of primitive races, not merely families of one spirited tribe would move together, but they would be attended or followed at intervals of time by other tribes dependent on or patronised by them; not necessarily closely related, though perhaps near neighbours. All, however, moved by the same impetus: continued pressure from without, a succession of famines at the door, or a vacuum to be filled up.

Had the Todas died out a hundred years ago, but little remembrance of them would survive at this day. Similarly, these defunct races live solely in their imperishable monuments.

In Chapter XIX., on the Boath, will be found the suggestion that that eccentric building may have belonged to the Kairn-builders. I do not wish to press the theory with undue vigour; yet, if form is in a degree, a sort of index or expression of the mind that adopts it, I think that, in the unusual shape of roof (pointing upwards) in the Boath, may lurk a mental impulse in co-ordination with that which prompted them to place kairns on the top of hills; some superior

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

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religious development of the tribe; the root, I may term it, of some such conception as leads us to the words:

Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.

Certain it is that the Todas, who grovel to the earth, show in their cremation custom, as in the architecture of their most holy place, a parity in lowliness as much marked as this prominence of individuality which we note in the Kairn-builders.

I have apparently stepped out of my way to speculate on the remains of an unknown people, but my object has been to show a possible connection between the Kairn-builders and the Todas.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. XIX.

under the same general idea, and apparently for similar purposes as the dairy of a tirîṭri or the pâlṭchi of any Mand. Then it holds a vat—which no other building does—whose use is not understood by the vorshâl in charge, and whose very existence is, I feel nearly certain, unknown to the people. If the vat was constructed for sacrificial purposes, then its use has been discontinued and forgotten, though the priest in charge is a vorshâl or sacrifice man.[1]

It is situated on an exposed site bearing the outlines of stone walls, built on a largeness of scale, and in a form, nowhere else found amongst these people—with a Kromlech and numerous Kairns dotted close about.

The specific name by which it is known—boath[2]—is peculiar, and applicable solely to that style of structure.

Now it should be borne in mind, if we would form an opinion on the origin of this edifice, that the Todas are unimaginative creatures of one idea; having one way of doing everything: intolerant of change or deviation from custom, unless for some manifestly practical advantage. How then do we find such a race in occupation of an eccentric building which does not fit in with any of its other institutions? Not a tirîṭri—for it is of lower grade in Toda estimation; its servant a vorshâl, not a God. Not an ordinary pâlṭchi, for one of the largest size exists apart, within a few paces of it.

As there is nobody who can give an explanation of the phenomenon, I will submit a theory of my own for consideration. May the boath not be the bethel of some tribe contemporaneous with, and cognate to, the Todas, which, taking refuge like them on these hills, died out in their presence—

[1] See Note 4 of Chapter VIII.

[2] Boath. An enclosed Jain temple is hard.

It may be deemed fanciful to refer to bauch or bothy. The Welsh is bwth, the Gaelic is both. This word is of very extensive use. The Tamil வீடு and Kanarese ಬೀಡು = house, may be compared.

The Todas and Dravidians generally, have much in common with the Celtic tribes. [Pope.]

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

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the Todas thus becoming inheritors of a curious and sacred building, possessing some relics, and possibly a herd of cattle attached?

The point of interest in this theory consists greatly in the possibility of the original owners of this boath being the builders of the circles, Kairns or Kromlechs,[6] or the erecters of the upright stones—Genesis xxviii. 18, 19—which are all found in great abundance on these hills.

Is this form of temple or surrounding wall found elsewhere—in other parts of the world—in connection with these erections and with massive ruins? Let us read an extract from the 'Explorations in the Peninsula of Sinai,' written by the Rev. F. W. Holland, and which will be found in 'The Recovery of Jerusalem.' 'During my wanderings in 1867,' he says, 'I found that there were other ruins of a much older date: houses similar in form to the Bothan, or beehive houses in Scotland, built of rough and massive stones, about five feet high, and forty to fifty feet in circumference, with no windows, and one small door about twenty inches high. . . . These houses are generally found in groups, and near them are often seen the ruins of tombs—circles of massive stones—similar to those which in England and Scotland are called Druids' circles.'[7]

[6] See Chapter I.

[7] Wilson Warren, 'The Recovery of Jerusalem.'

4: King G-5 (no date) 1870 Todas

The Todas belief is the existence of an invisible and supreme Spirit, and in a future state, though this they seem to regard as one of a somewhat mundane character, inasmuch as buffaloes and abundance of milk are to be the portion of the faithful. They also pay reverence to, though they do not worship, inferior objects, such as hills and forests and the rising sun, precisely as did the ancient Celts. In connection with the adoration of light, they also make an obeisance to their evening lamps on lighting them. The observance of this custom in Europe is mentioned by Edward Spencer, who, writing in 1596, states that, "at the kindling of fire and lighting of candles, the Scots and Irish use superstitious rites."*

The presence in their temples of large stones, which have, by superficial observers, been regarded as gods, has led to the belief that these people are idolaters; but this is certainly not the case. There is no doubt that the shapeless symbols are merely representatives of an unseen power, and not in themselves actual objects of worship; though with other races, preserving less strictly their primitive character, this original use has degenerated into idolatry. The fact, therefore, that this tribe has so preserved to the present day, in the midst of a heathen country, the primary object and intention of such symbols, is one worthy of notice; and leads to the supposition that the Todas may be equally unchanged in all other respects since the earliest days of their corporate existence as a people.

It would be a most interesting point to determine satisfactorily whether or not the early progenitors of the Todas were the erectors of the numerous Druidical circles and remains found on their hills, and which crown the summit of almost every peak throughout the Nilgiri range. Several of the cromlechs have, rather against the wishes of the hill-tribes, been examined at different times, and found to contain urns of clay filled with black earth, charred fragments of human bones, and roughly made clay figures of buffaloes, and in some instances bells; the whole lying under large flat stones within the circle. It is to be noted, too, that these urns, as well as the bells, very closely resemble those that have been found in Great Britain.

Within the last few months, "a set of iron implements" has been found in a cromlech on the southern side of the Nilgiri

* *Early Races of Scotland.*

4: King G-5 (no date) 1870 Anthro Toda Anthro

172 range. The description given of them is as yet so vague that it is impossible to judge of their exact character; but I believe that they resemble the bill-hook and sword or dagger form.

I found cairns and other remains in the straths running up between the higher summits—on which, as before stated, they are more usually found—as stone altars, surrounded by a ring of smaller stones, and mounds of earth enclosed by circular walls.

The circles are evidently regarded with veneration by the Todas, as well as by the Vadacas; but it is difficult to elicit information concerning them. Though the former tribe neither use sepulchral urns nor erect monuments at the present day, they invariably burn the remains of their dead within a circle of stones, and afterwards bury them there, as will be hereafter described; while the presence of the buffalo images, and the similarity in make and texture of the ancient urns to the modern pottery of their workpeople, the Khotas, seem to indicate some connection between the Todas of past days and the remains in question.

535 The Todas are especially remarkable for the practice of polyandry, a custom which exists among but few tribes as, for instance, in parts of Thibet and of the Himalayas, among the Nayrs of Malabar, and one or two other races only. A Toda woman often has three or four husbands, who are all brothers, and with each of whom she cohabits a month at a
537 time. What is more singular, such young men as, by the paucity of women among the tribe, are prevented from obtaining a share in a wife, are allowed, with the permission of the fraternal husbands, to become temporary partners with them.

543 Notwithstanding these singular family arrangements, the greatest harmony appears to prevail among all parties—husbands, wives, and lovers. The children live happily with their putative parents, equally well treated on every side, and as common to all alike, though, I believe, if any special reason demands it, the senior husband can claim the elder children.

532 The betrothal to the first husband commences at a very early
533 age; and all subsequent brothers of the bridegroom-elect become from their birth bound to the common prospective wife. The compact, as regards the first pair, is conducted by their respective male parents; the father of the bridegroom *in esse* presenting a buffalo and a new robe to the other, the acceptance

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
AW60 Toda AW60

Despite the hypothesis of Dr. Rivers that the Todas are derived from one or more of the races of Malabar, their origin is buried among the secrets of the past. So too is the history of the ancient builders of cairns and barrows on the Nilgiri plateau, which were explored by Mr. Breeks when Commissioner of the Nilgiris.* The bulk of the Breeks' collection is now preserved in the Madras Museum, and includes a large series of articles in pottery, quite unlike anything known from other parts of Southern India. Concerning this series, Mr. R. Bruce Foote writes as follows.† "The most striking objects are tall jars, many-storied cylinders, of varying diameter with round or conical bases, fashioned to rest upon pottery ring-stands, or to be stuck into soft soil, like the amphoræ of classical times. These jars were surmounted by domed lids. On these lids stood or sat figures of the most varied kind of men, or animals, much more rarely of inanimate objects, but all modelled in the rudest and most grotesque style. Grotesque and downright ugly as are these figures, yet those representing men and women are extremely interesting from the light they throw upon the stage of civilization their makers had attained to, for they illustrate the fashion of the garments as also of the ornaments they wore, and of the arms or implements carried by them. The animals they had domesticated, those they chased, and others that they probably worshipped, are all indicated. Many figures of their domestic animals, especially their buffaloes and sheep, are decorated with garlands and bells, and show much ornamentation, which seems to indicate that they were painted over, a custom which yet prevails in many

* J. W. Breeks. Account of the Primitive Tribes and Monuments of the Nilgiris, 1873.

† Catalogue of the Prehistoric Antiquities, Government Museum, Madras, 1901.

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
AW60 Toda AW60

172 parts." Among the most interesting figures are those of heavily bearded men riding on horses, and big-horned buffaloes which might have been modelled from the Toda buffaloes of to-day, and, like these, at funerals and migration ceremonies, bear a bell round the neck.

234 193 Two forms of Toda dairy have so far been noticed. But there remains a third kind, called the ti mand, concerning which Dr. Rivers writes as follows. "The ti is the name of an institution, which comprises a herd of buffaloes, with a number of dairies and grazing districts, tended by a dairy-man priest called palol, with an assistant called kaltmokh. Each dairy, with its accompanying buildings and pasturage, is called a ti mad, or ti village. The buffaloes belonging to a ti are of two kinds, distinguished as persiner and punir. The former are the sacred buffaloes, and the elaborate ceremonial of the ti dairy is concerned with their milk. The punir correspond in some respects to the putiir of the ordinary village dairy, and their milk and its products are largely for the personal use and profit of the palol, and are not treated with any special ceremony. During the whole time he holds office, the palol may not visit his home or any other ordinary village, though he may visit another ti village. Any business with the outside world is done either through the kaltmokh, or with people who come to visit him at the ti. If the palol has to cross a river, he may not pass by a bridge, but must use a ford, and it appears that he may only use certain fords. The palol must be celibate, and, if married, he must leave [595] his wife, who is in most cases also the wife of his brother or brothers." I visited the ti mand near Paikāra by appointment, and, on arrival near the mand, found the two palols, well-built men aged about thirty and fifty, clad in black cloths, and two kaltmokhs, youths aged

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
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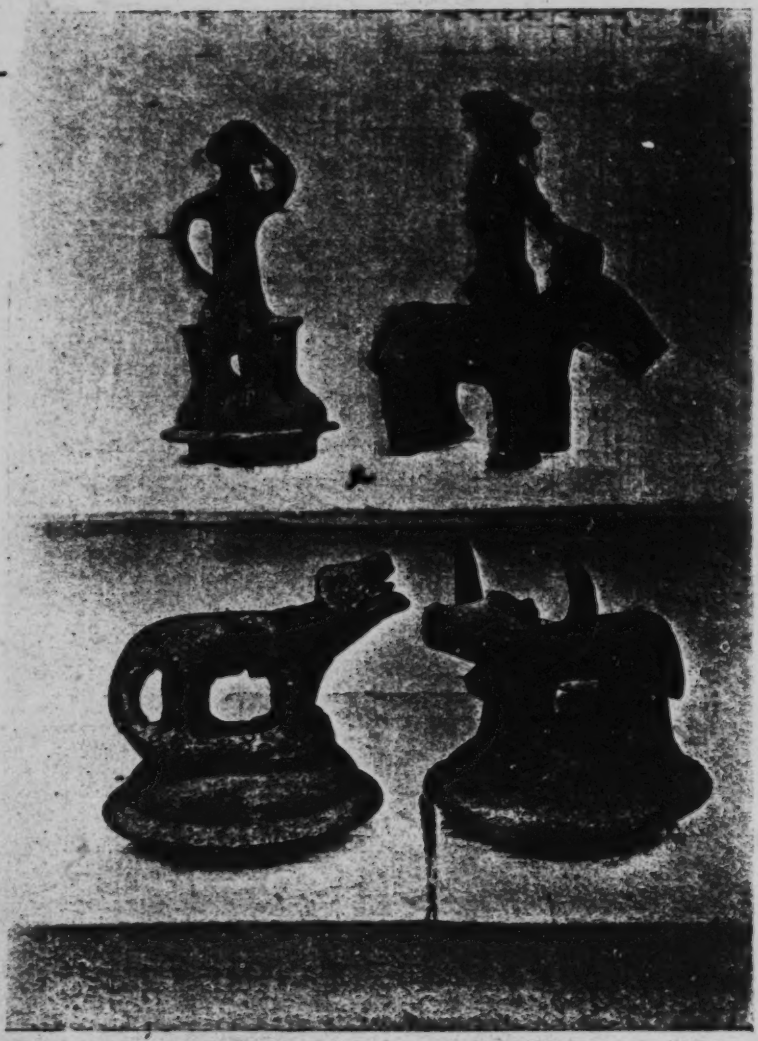

FIGURES FROM NILGIRI CAIRNS.

[facing p. 137]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Toda AW60

and-arrow ceremony of the Todas, the position of the child in the kin group is not in any doubt. We cannot argue that wherever we have the general structure we shall also find a loose or easily alterable connection between the spouses, but we can argue that the orderliness of marriageable and nonmarriageable kin categories permits a wide definition of the connection between the spouses: it can mean simply "intercourse," or, as in southern Ceylon, it can create a unique estate and a lasting bond between the pair. The open possibility of the loose connection clearly makes both polyandry and polygyny possible among people who utilize some version of the general structure. We shall look at further examples later on.

The similarity between the kin structure of the Toda and the peoples discussed in Ceylon is hardly surprising. There have been many close contacts between Ceylon and the mainland. Not only does the culture give an impression of underlying similarity but the similarity sometimes persists when pursued to the particulars of ceremonies. Thus the gift of a cloth at the union of a man and woman is a custom found among the Toda, the Sinhalese, and many castes on the Malabar coast. Again, the white cloths which are placed on the corpse by the Kandyan Sinhalese are found among the Toda (and Nayar) though each community puts this cloth to different use.

The further similarity, too, in such key words as *ichchil* (pollution) in Toda and *kili* in Sinhalese, or *matchuni* (Toda for cross-cousin) and *massina* (Sinhalese), and many others increases the impression that we are dealing with variations on a common theme.[4] It is the fundamental features common to both systems which have engaged our attention: it could certainly not be claimed that structural similarity goes beyond the fundamentals. But that is the point: each community in this region uses a variety of special customs to set itself off from others. The manner of wearing clothes, different types of sari and dress, bodily marks—all these are well known. But it appears that the process has been carried even into matters of structural importance, so that one community will have a certain kind of marriage simply in order to distinguish itself even more from another community.

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Although many books have been written by scholars and others on the multifold aspects of Southeast India, those that deal with kinship are few, and of recent date. Our conclusions must, of necessity, be limited

[4] The intriguing similarity between the manner of wearing their robes by the Toda priests (who handle the sacred milk) and by Buddhist monks elsewhere is obviously hardly an accident.